The Cheerful Letter

Every place a church; every day the Lord's day; all events blessings; all joy thanksgiving; and all nature and life full of Good.—James Freeman Clarke.

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A PSALM OF THANKSGIVING

From Psa. 147

Praise ye the Lord: for it is good to sing praises to our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely.

He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.

Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite.

Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God.

Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion.

For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; he hath blessed thy children within thee.

He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat.

He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the Lord.

MYSTERY IN THE WORKINGS OF GOD

SCIENCE sometimes states its aim as the elimination of mystery. It would, if it could, make all things clear, yet the hope of this accomplishment seems as far away as ever.

Jesus made appeal to this element of mystery in things. Retaining the sense of wonder, which characterizes the poet and the child, Jesus reminded one inquirer, Nicodemus, of the mystery of the wind. Nicodemus, it has been suggested, was a wise old man, fettered and fossilized by much learning in the schools of the Rabbis. His introductory words are laden with all the politeness, formality and stupidity of a typical man of the schools. To all this ponderous artificiality, Jesus answers with a word, reminding him that he had never listened to the wind.

"The wind bloweth where it listeth. Thou hearest the sound . . . but thou canst not tell whence . . . or whither."

Winds played a real part in the life of Palestine, and were impressively regular. In the winter blowing from the west and southwest they brought the winter rains. In summer blowing out of the drier northwest, they greatly mitigated the heat. "Those," says G. Adam Smith, "who have not traveled through a Syrian summer can scarcely realize how welcome, how unfailing a friend is the forenoon wind from the sea . . . peasants do all their winnowing against this steady wind, and there is no happier scene in the land than afternoon on the threshing floors, when he rustles the thickly strewn sheaves and scatters the chaff before him." The night breezes blow in the opposite direction from the day breezes, and begin after an interval of stillness just following the sunset.

"The wind bloweth," bringing refreshing for man and renewal for the earth, and yet quite beyond his control and his understanding.

One is led into far-reaching relations and wonders as he thinks of the winds and their amazing movements over the surface of the earth; on the different sorts of winds and all they mean to man. It takes a universe to make a wind and intricate and complex indeed are the forces that determine motion and direction and all beyond the power of man.

The mystery of the wind is, of course, only part of the mystery of the universe. That is found everywhere, even in simplest and most commonplace things. Plant life, for instance, suggests endless mystery, and what amazingly mysterious powers are hidden in the seeds we plant

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in garden and field. How does each know what to take out of the soil and the air? What is it that keeps each true to type?

Who can explain the wonder of a leaf or tendril, or a thousand and one adaptations to environment found in the plant world?

Mystery has its own place in the education of the soul. In such a universe as this is, it would be passing strange if religion, the deepest of all man's expressions of his relationship to the universe, had no mysteries.

The highest wisdom at times is to rest in the mystery. Theology like science has often been in too great a hurry to explain and define. The greatest things are indefinable; they can never be expressed in a formula.

In spheres other than the physical, earth and heaven are interlinked. The spiritual experiences of the race are no less certain and no less remarkable than the wonders of science.

It is certain that great spiritual overturnings have happened in the lives of men, such as have issued in new revelations and emancipations for the race. Man's life is strangely open to the invasion of spiritual influences. In most unexpected hours he finds the compass deflected and the direction changed.

"The wind bloweth where it listeth."

We once heard of an Englishman in India whose life was unworthy, and who, after winning a certain race, awakened the following day strangely disturbed. He had the impression that someone was praying for him and that he simply must make a new start. No one spoke to him, yet an influence was coming into his life and making a difference. He started anew, and became a dedicated spirit.

Life certainly has great hours, when men are changed, lifted out of their sin or weakness or unbelief, and when in reverent wonder they breathe the name of God and dedicate their lives to His service.

Some of the most moving things in history gather about such experiences, as in the case of an Isaiah, a Paul or an Augustine. Some of the most wonderful of these experiences are never known to the great world. No one can foretell just how or where the spirit of God may transform a man—these things happen in most unexpected ways and hours. Spiritual influences flow in upon men's lives, unseen, mysterious, yet strangely potent. "The wind bloweth," said Jesus, as he and Nicodemus heard the evening, or was it the early morning, breeze playing in the trees.

In its mysterious comings and goings He saw some parallel to the mysterious movings of the Spirit of God. We like to think that Nicodemus saw things in a new light after that intimate interview beneath the stars!

God dwells in every human body. His spirit performs all the marvelous chemical operations which are essential to the body's growth. Science can explore the body and tell us how one thing leads to another, but the power that transforms food into blood, and the selectivity that takes here a little to create bone, there a little to create muscle, here a little to create the delicate iris of an eye, there a little to create a woman's silky hair—all that lies beyond the biologist's microscope or the surgeon's scalpel or the philosopher's thought power.

Likewise the working of the spirit. Apparently the whole object of the wonderful creation of the human body is to furnish a temporary dwelling place—a cradle so to speak—for the development of a human personality, a child of God, and God's methods of developing and perfecting that personality, that soul, are as

marvelous and mysterious as are His workings in the physical body. Thousands, even millions, of people are sure that they have had mystical experiences of God's spirit but they can not explain it, nor do they wholly understand it. Like Samuel and Elijah of old they have heard God speak, but it was a still small voice, and soundless to the ear.

Life offers broad fields for the development of faith. How inconceivably silly are those people who say they will believe nothing they cannot understand. They cannot live a minute without depending upon facts which they do not and never will understand.

What surpassing wisdom and suggestiveness in the risen Jesus' words to the once doubting Thomas:

Thomas, because thou hast seen me thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed. —THE CHURCHMAN AFIELD in *Boston Transcript.*

QUIET MOMENTS WITH THE PSALMIST

Psalm 37—"Fret Not"

DAVID is an old man. He has something of special value to say to us, and all the more valuable because it is the result of the observations of a long life on two most perplexing human questions.

Why is it that the wicked are allowed to live and enjoy so much prosperity? On the other hand, why do the righteous suffer affliction? How often have you and I pondered these questions!

David's answer is simple and sure: the afflictions of the righteous are but temporary—ultimately the righteous inherit the earth and delight themselves in the abundance of peace. Real religion promotes ultimate happiness. On the other hand, the prosperity of the wicked is a short-lived thing—eventually they will be cut down like grass, and their place shall not be found. However happy the wicked may seem to be now, they will finally be cut off.

But David's answer is more inclusive than this. It is an advantage to be righteous, he says, even with reference to only the present life. As Barnes says, "It is better to have God for our friend in life, and our support in death, than to have all the external prosperity of wicked men." This is the practical lesson of the psalm.

The keynote of the psalm, "Fret not," is repeated three times—in verses 1, 7, and 8. Like the sweet chime of a distant bell it sounds throughout the poem. The piled-up verses of the psalm are but a succession of varying images of quietness and of the ultimate fate of the wicked.

The righteous will have the desire of their hearts. God will make them shine like the light. They will be satisfied in time of famine. The Lord will hold their hands, and keep them from being utterly cast down. God will deliver them from the wicked.

But as for the wicked, their sword will enter into their own hearts. They will consume away into smoke. Their posterity will be cut off. The righteous will see their end. They will no longer even exist.

To express this succession of ideas David employed an acrostic form. In the original the meditation consists of a succession of twenty-two short portions, each section beginning with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The psalm somewhat resembles a chapter in the book of Proverbs; each portion is fairly complete in itself. The total effect depends upon the cumulation of images, rather than upon the logical development of thought. Thus the acrostic structure, as Dr. Moulton says, "suggests supporting truths recurring with the regularity of the alphabet."

While the entire psalm has in all ages been very dear to God's troubled children, certain verses have held a peculiar fascination. Dr. David Livingstone frequently quoted verse 5. Verses 1 and 7 inspired one of the most exquisite airs in Mendelssohn's oratorio "Elijah." Jesus embodied part of verse 11 in the catalogue of Beatitudes.

—By CHARLES E. WENIGER in *Signs of the Times.*

CORRESPONDENCE AND APPEALS

MISS ETHEL H. STUDLEY, *Chairman*
56 School Street, Hingham, Mass.

If you wish to become a member of this Department, please send the Chairman the following information:

Your name, age and address (give your name in full, also your husband's first name); names and ages of your children; or, if you are not married, names and ages of your brothers and sisters; name and address of your minister.

State clearly whether you wish (1) to correspond with someone; (2) to study by mail; (3) to appeal for some article on our approved list, which does not include money or clothing.

Be sure to give all the information requested.

When a correspondent moves to a new address, notice must be sent to the Chairman of this Department.

CORRESPONDENCE

Regular correspondents may be adopted after consultation with Miss Ethel H. Studley, Chairman, 56 School Street, Hingham, Mass. This regulation is necessary to avoid duplication in arranging for regular correspondents.

1. Miss Thelma Dotson, R.F.D. 1, Dayton, Tenn., wants a correspondent. She is sixteen years old. She goes to church when she can get a chance.

2. Miss Ruby Crawford, Thelma, Va., seventeen years old, also wants a correspondent. She goes to church once a month.

3. Mrs. Alice Barker, Grassy Creek, N. C., a sixty-six year old widow, wants someone to write to her. She lives with her only son on a rented farm. She cannot walk very far and so does not get out very much.

4. Mrs. Estel Blevins, Brandon, N. C., aged fifty-seven, writes: "I have been reading your Cheerful Letter Magazine for a long time, and enjoy it very much. I wonder if it would be possible to add my name to your circle of good cheer. I have no way of going anywhere and find life very lonely." She would like someone to write to her.

5. Mrs. F. W. Blevins, c/o David Blevins, Jefferson, N. C., would like to correspond with someone. She is thirty-two years old, and has two girls and three boys. She would also like religious papers.

6. Mrs. Arthur Lambert, Rugby, Va., aged twenty-one, would like a correspondent. She has one little girl. She lives in a thinly settled mountain region, and goes once a month to the Missionary Baptist Church.

7. Mrs. Annie Bethany, Route 2, Ozark, Ark., writes: "I should like to write to someone, as I am a young country woman. I have one little girl."

8. Miss Mary Brooks, Box 31, Ansonville, N. C., writes: "My mother used to be a member of the Cheerful Letter Exchange some years ago, and since she died I had lost track of all her correspondents. I should like to receive letters as my parents are dead and I live with my sister. I am twenty-seven years old, and a cripple from birth."

9. Mrs. Louise Copeland, Booster, Ark., aged twenty-eight, would like a correspondent. She has two children aged seven and one.

10. Mrs. Claude Hickman, Route 1, Dayton, Tenn., would like a correspondent. She is twenty-seven years old, and has two children. The boy is four years old, and the girl is three months old.

11. Miss Eula Mae Howard, Route 1, Athens, Tenn., aged sixteen, likes reading and sewing. She writes: "I get

lonesome and blue. My mother died two years ago. My three brothers and I live alone together. My youngest brother goes to school when we are able to send him. I am looking forward to a correspondence, and I hope I shall prove satisfactory."

12. Mrs. Troy Greer, Route 1, Box 86, Rugby, Va., wants a correspondent. She is fifty-four years old, and has two grown-up children. She goes every month to the Lutheran Church.

13. Mrs. Gladys Hoffman, c/o Lizzie Brents, Cleveland, Ark., writes: "I am twenty-eight years old and have a little boy two years old and a little three months old girl. I like housework very much. We do not have a home or anything much. I get lonely and should like to hear from someone."

14. Mancie Jones, Scotland, Ark., writes: "I should like to continue my education by taking a correspondence course. I am interested in English. Also I am interested in Bible study. Could one take a course in that? I am a high school graduate."

15. Mrs. Arthur Osborne, Rugby, Va., aged twenty-three, has one child about three months old. She wants a correspondent, and tells us: "I hope to be adopted by some good friend with small children."

16. Mrs. Allie Potter, Route 2, Box 49, Dayton, Tenn., writes: "I live in the country five miles from Dayton. I am in poor health and I feel lonely and should appreciate a correspondence with the sisters of other states." She has three grown-up children.

17. Mrs. Lucy Preslar, Route 1, Box 149, Peachland, N. C., writes: "I am a farmer's wife aged twenty-two years. Since my husband is at work most of the time, I get very lonesome and I just wondered if one of your workers would care to correspond with me." She has one little boy two months old.

18. Mrs. C. C. Reves, aged forty-nine, has a boy eighteen years old and two girls, sixteen and fourteen years old. She lives in Booster, Ark. She would like someone to write to her.

19. Mrs. C. N. Thomas, Route 2, Polkton, N. C., Writes: "I am a farmer's wife with four small children. The youngest is two months old. I am twenty-five years old. I surely would like to have a correspondent."

20. "I wonder if some good friend would correspond with me. I am fifty-nine years old and live twelve miles from town. My children are all married except four boys, and they are away lots and it's so lonesome. It would be so much cheer if some good lady would adopt me." So writes Mrs. Math G. Thomas, Polkton, N. C.

21. From Mrs. Heman Timmons, Seagrave, Texas, we have received the following: "I am a young married woman of nineteen. We live in a strange town and I get very lonesome. I should like to be a member of the Cheerful Letter and have a correspondent."

22. Miss Sarah Jane Traywick, Marshville, N. C., aged sixty-eight, has lost all the members of her immediate family. She writes: "I live alone way out in the country five miles from the village. I am very lonely as you may know. So won't you please send me a correspondent. I promise to do the best I can."

23. Mrs. Ed. C. Turner, Crabtree, Ark., writes: "I hope you can find me a correspondent soon as I don't go anywhere often. We live so far from everywhere and don't have any way to go. My husband doesn't make much money. His aged father and mother live with us. I don't have any way to send my little girl to school, as it is too far for her to walk, and she would have a mountain to climb. We get lonesome for someone to correspond with."

24. Mrs. Donald Weaver, Husk, N. C., writes: "I am a poor woman and have three children. I am not very stout and my husband has most of the work to do. I pray that I may find a good lady or friend for correspondent. I live in the mountains and when hubby is off at work, I get very lonely. I should like to have some good Bible

reading." Mrs. Weaver is twenty-nine years old.

25. Mrs. Cresswell Wright, Route 1, Box 206, Peachland, N. C., writes: "I am a young wife twenty years old. I have a little girl. My husband is away a lot and I get very lonesome. I should like to have a correspondent. I am a member of the Baptist Church."

APPEALS

Anyone who wishes to answer an appeal may obtain the name and address from Miss Ethel H. Studley, Chairman.

1. "I am forty-nine years old and have five children from twelve to twenty-three years old. We live on rented land. Three of the boys go to school. I have to stay by myself lots of the time, especially during school hours. Some kind of needle work and some quilt pieces would help to pass away the time."

2. A twenty-eight year old mother of three small children, who has always had to work hard and has had little chance to go to school, is now trying to teach her children all she can. She wishes they might have some pencils and paper, but most of all, a set of A B C blocks. The oldest boy is six years old but is too small to walk three and a half miles to school. If she had a primer, she could teach him to read.

3. A fifty-eight year old grandmother whose children are all married, takes care of her three granddaughters, as their mother is in an insane asylum and is not expected to be well again. She would appreciate anything that she and the girls could use.

4. A twenty-six year old mother, who is very nervous and doesn't get out very much, would like some quilt pieces; and the children would like some used toys.

5. "I have had bad health all along for five years, and had an operation recently. My neighbors are not very sociable, and I am quite lonesome. I should like magazines, thread, and quilt pieces."

6. "I am a poor woman. My husband is a farmer and we don't have much. I have six children from six to sixteen years old. Four are in school. I am in bad health, as I have asthma, and I cannot work much. I enjoy piecing quilts and reading. If you have anything that would help my children in school, I should surely be glad."

7. "I am the mother of twelve children. They are all married and my husband is dead. I live by myself off in a hollow. I am seventy-three years old and in bad health and I get so lonesome. I like to read and piece quilts."

8. A mother of seven children, from two to fifteen years old, would like to get some reading material and some cards. They live five miles from the nearest town and get very lonely.

9. "I am a poor woman sixty-two years old, and my husband is seventy-four. We are both shut-ins. I should like to have some reading and some thread."

10. Can someone send some sugar bags and small pieces of cloth and some thread to a mother of three children? She is forty-two years old and her children are from two to thirteen years old. She is not very well.

11. "I was born Oct. 16, 1925. I did not have a chance to get the proper schooling a boy my age should. I like to read real well but do not have many books. I have read what I have many times. I read the Bible real often. I do not have any stories about Jesus but would like to get some soon."

12. An old lady seventy-five years old would enjoy any kind of sewing or reading matter. She is a widow.

13. A mother of a three year old boy would like some good books to read and any kind of sewing. They live way back on the river about four and a half miles from town.

14. A lonely crippled girl twenty-nine years old would like sugar and salt bags, quilt pieces, and any kind of thread.

15. "I should like to join your Cheerful Letter circle. I am nineteen and have been married five months. I came

from a large family, and it is very lonesome during the day when my husband is away at work. I live on a farm about two miles from the highway. I should like any kind of sewing, quilt pieces, or anything to pass the time away."

16. "I should like to become a member of the Cheerful Letter Exchange. I should like embroidery thread, quilt pieces, and anything that my nine year old girl could use."

17. "If I am not asking too much, I should like to have some rug pieces, quilt pieces, and thread; also my thirteen year old boy who is in school would like to be remembered."

18. "I am a widow, aged sixty-six, not able to work, and I should appreciate quilt pieces, thread, and good reading."

19. "I should love to have some quilt pieces, needles, thread, and something for my little six year old girl, as she gets very lonesome when the other children are in school."

20. A mother of three little children, who lives out in the country and is not very well, would like some quilt pieces and some knitting yarn.

There are several requests for quilt pieces and rug pieces.

LIST OF SUGGESTIONS FOR CHRISTMAS AND OCCASIONAL GIFTS TO CORRESPONDENTS

Books, School Helps, Stationery

- Anniversary Cards
- Bible
- Books, adults' and children's
- Calendars
- Christmas Carols—free copies
- Crayons
- Dictionary
- Erasers
- Loose-leaf Notebook
- Magazines and continued stories cut from several issues
- Music
- Paste
- Pens
- Pencils
- Picture Postcards
- Pictures
- Scrapbooks and material to make them
- Writing Paper

Sewing Material

- Buttons
- Crochet Cotton
- Crochet Hooks
- Crochet Patterns
- Embroidery Floss
- Lace
- Knitting Needles
- Needles
- Patterns—secondhand
- Pins
- Quilt Scraps
- Safety Pins
- Scissors
- Sewing Book
- Snap Fasteners
- Stamped Pieces
- Sugar and Salt Bags
- Tape Measure
- Thimbles
- Thread
- Yarn

Toiletries

- Comb
- Handkerchiefs
- Nail File
- Perfume
- Pocket Mirror
- Soap
- Talcum Powder
- Tooth Brush
- Tooth Paste

Miscellaneous

- Aprons
- Bags, all kinds
- Beads
- Bulbs
- Candy
- Christmas Tree Ornaments
- Coin Purses
- Flower and Vegetable Seeds
- Games
- Jigsaw Puzzles
- Paper Napkins
- Paper Tablecloths for special occasions
- Ribbons
- Toys

Much of this material may be secondhand—but in good condition.

A TREE FRIEND

There's nothing that's nicer than telling a tree
The secrets you wouldn't tell even to me.
A tree is so quiet, a tree is so still,
And listens an hour or a day, if you will.

There's something that's better than merely pretend
In having at least one old tree for a friend.
And if you reach up to its arms with your hands
You'll know just how truly a tree understands.

Now every tree knows the loveliest things,
But if you would hear you must wait till it sings.
A whisper of music will open your ear,
And then you must listen, and listen to hear.

You'll hear about fairies and tree toads and bees,
And many more people as charming as these.
Just why the leaves dance when the wind passes by,
And where the birds go in the rain to keep dry.

So if you are lonely and sighing, "Dear me!"
Run out of the house and make friends with a tree.
An old tree will listen to all that you say.
An old tree is wise and an old tree is gay.

—*By* MAY JUSTUS.

WHERE TO WRITE

Information concerning Rural Schools should be sent to Mrs. Laura M. Hurst, 78 Penfield Street, Roslindale, Mass.

NOTICE

The Brookline (First Parish) Branch will send packages of old Christmas cards to those desiring them. Apply to Miss Martha Suter, Sherborn, Mass.

WINTERING ROSE BUSHES

ROSES planted this Autumn will need good protection when cold weather comes. No garden maker should expect his roses to survive the Winter if they are simply plunged into the ground and allowed to live or die. Most of them will die. Just what method to use for protection is a matter about which growers are far from being in agreement. In a garden which is not exposed to high winds and which has some shelter from houses or trees, most garden roses will go through the Winter if the earth around the plants is hilled up in a cone shape to the depth of a foot. This work should be done just about the time freezing weather comes on. The earth, however, should not be taken from the beds between the plants. The proper plan is to draw in good soil from some other place. Small beds may receive additional protection by filling the space between the rows with leaves, or the boughs of evergreen trees. Sometimes boards are set up around the beds to confine the insulating material.

—*Boston Globe.*

NATURE'S PAY DAYS ARE AT HAND

SOMEONE has described Autumn as the great pay day of Nature—the day when she gives up in bountifulness the treasures of her strong box.

Nature pays those who work in her garden in exact accordance with their diligence and industry—her crops are yielded in accordance with the seeds they have planted and how they have cultivated the plants.

Nature "docks" those who shirk; she rewards those who work.

If, in the Spring of life, we sow seeds of friendship and neighborliness, and cultivate them with care and patience and love through the leaf and the bud and the blossom stages, shall we not harvest good will in the Fall?

And the beauty of it is that it is never too late to begin planting in Life's Garden, though the earlier we plant the earlier we begin to reap rewards.

—*The Blue Flowers.*

"THANKSGIVING"

"NO holiday in all our calendar is comparable to Thanksgiving.

"There is no holiday quite like it anywhere in the world. It celebrates no battle, no fall of a Bastile, no bank or business holiday, the birthday of no great man, no political revolution, no church ritual. It is the great holiday of common people who have worked all the year and now thank God humbly for good harvests. We are not celebrating Washington or Columbus or the Declaration of Independence—but just the true, good things, the simple blessings of the soil and the common life.

"Most holidays are somewhat pagan and if traced back are rooted in the dull and bloody stories of some old war; but Thanksgiving is the holiday of peace, the celebration of work and the simple life. You must go back to the old Greeks for anything to compare with it—a true folk festival that speaks the poetry of the turn of the seasons, the beauty of the harvest, the ripe product of the year, and the deep, deep connection of all these things with God."

—DAVID GRAYSON in
"Adventures in Understanding."

"The common things of life to me appear
The greatest things we know upon this sphere.
Love is placed first—as needed most on Earth—
Love that is symbolized in human birth;
For God is said to have created man
In His own image, when man's life began.
"One thing seems certain for our mission here:
To seek in daily life both joy and cheer.
Sun, Moon, and stars proclaim a God of Love,
Friendship dwells here and not alone above.
In Friendships' holy name, I ask once more,
Abide with me, seeking the open door."

—*Selected.*

A timely kindness is a double good.

THERE'S ALWAYS A CHANCE

THERE is a woman in New York who is recognized as an outstanding woman journalist. But once upon a time it took considerable stick-to-it-iveness for her to get a start. Girls weren't being accepted in the journalistic world. What could a girl know about news, anyway?

But this girl wanted a newspaper job. So she went to a city paper. She asked for one and was told very politely that there were no jobs, and she needn't try again. She didn't leave. She made another request. She said: "Would you mind if I just sit around and watch?"

All the reporters and desk-men looked at her in amusement. "If you want to stick around it's all right, though," they said.

All that first day the girl sat. Nobody expected her back the next day, but she came. Again she sat. The third morning she came walking in again. Once more she took a seat for the day.

The city desk decided that it would put an end to the girl's visits. An old woman had died. She was very queer and had left a whole fortune to a houseful of cats which she had. However, one black cat had displeased her, and had been cut off without even enough money to buy a bowl of milk.

The story was regarded as a joke, so the girl was sent out to do a feature on it. Everyone thought that she would be disgusted with the assignment and go home.

But she didn't. She came in with a story that was clever and sparkling. She just imagined how the disinherited cat felt, and had "interviewed" him.

The paper used her story. And she got a job. She had kept on when her presence hadn't been wanted. And she had been able to deliver the goods when the time came.

—*The Uplift.*

It was only a glad "Good morning,"
As she passed along the way;
But it spread the morning's glory,
Over the livelong day.

—CARLOTTA PERRY.

WITH OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

"FRAIDIE CAT"

[Concluded]

As soon as Aunt Nell was gone, Marilee locked the door. She decided that she would feel more comfortable on the soft old feather bed with her head under a cover, so she put out the light and climbed into bed with her clothes on. As the storm increased in violence, she pulled a quilt up over her face and tried to shut out the terrifying sounds. The lightning tore through the heavens, followed by crash after crash of terrific thunder. The rain came down in torrents. For a time Marilee lay tense with fear, but after a deafening crash, the worst of a series, she crept from her bed to the window, impelled by the fear that the house had been struck and was on fire. Just then another flash lighted up the barn, and she should plainly see a thin tongue of flame curling up under the roof.

"The barn is on fire. Oh, poor Old Coach and Bob's prize calf are in there. Of, if Uncle Sam would only come!" and the frightened girl wrung her hands while the tears ran down her cheeks. Then came an instant lull in the storm. Marilee plainly heard the frightened neigh of the old horse which, with the calf, Princess, was imprisoned in the burning barn.

Catching up her bathrobe, Marilee threw it over her head and dashed out into the storm. She ran as fast as she could to the barn, dragged open the heavy door and entered. The place was already well filled with smoke. Marilee could not see, but she was guided by the thrashing about of the frightened horse. She untied the halter with trembling fingers and tried to lead her pet from the barn, but Old Coach would not budge. Suddenly remembering what she had read about horses in burning barns, Marilee tore the bathrobe from around herself and threw it over his head. Sudden relief from the smoke quieted the suffering horse, and he allowed himself to be led from the burning building. Once out in the open air, Marilee jerked the robe from his head, turned him loose and dashed back into the calf-stall. Led by the pitiful bawling of the calf, she soon had the bathrobe over its head. The frightened creature rushed out pell mell, taking the robe with her into the darkness. Knowing that no other animals remained in the barn to be roasted, Marilee ran shivering to the house without the protection of the bathrobe. When she stumbled in the door, breathless, her one thought was to get help at once to save the buildings near the barn if possible. She ran to the telephone, gave the crank a frantic twist, then put her ear to the receiver. Not a sound could be heard in spite of the severe storm which had not yet spent its fury. She tried again, but it was useless. The lightning had burned out a wire.

"The phone is dead. What can I do? Oh, what shall I do?" and the exhausted girl sank sobbing to the floor. There she lay for what seemed hours to her, but in reality was only a few moments, when she was aroused by someone pounding on the kitchen door.

"Mother, unlock the door," came in Bob's excited voice.

Marilee stumbled through the dark to the door and threw it wide open.

"Oh, Uncle Sam—the barn—"

"Yes, I know. Where is your Aunt Nell?"

"Aunt Nell went to Betty Smith's. Betty's boy is sick. I couldn't get help to save the barn. Hurry. Let's do something," Marilee gasped.

"It's too late to save the barn, now. The other buildings won't catch from it in this rain." Then without noticing Marilee's wet clothing, he went over to Bob and said, "Don't take on so, Son. I feel terribly about the animals, too. I can hardly stand it to think of their suffering. It's lucky I turned the other horses out."

"My calf is gone. Now I won't get to take her to the Fair. I can't have anything," sobbed the broken-hearted boy.

"Why, Princess is safe, and so is Old Coach," explained Marilee, who was be-

ginning to be herself again. "I turned them out in the rain."

"You? Why, Marilee—why, I thought you were afraid to go out in the storm," said Bob coming to his feet in wonder. "You *are* wet as sop."

"I was afraid, but I couldn't let those poor animals suffer, could I? Course I'm wet," confessed Marilee.

"Why Marilee, you're great—you're a hero," exclaimed the happy boy.

Marilee remained on the farm for another month. It was a much happier month than the first, because Bob no longer called her "Fraidie Cat."

Courtesy of *The Beacon*.

THE WINNER'S NAME

By KATE S. GATES

EBENEZER COLLINS DARLING,—that was his name, and how he did hate it, the first part of it, that is. But there had been an Ebenezer in the family since time immemorial, and Grandfather was going to be so disappointed that Father and Mother, rather against their own wishes, bestowed it upon their first son.

As I said, he hated it. "I wouldn't mind so much if folks would call me Eb, or even Eben," he said. But the boys are forever yelling out 'Eben-e-e-zer,' and lots of times they make it 'Darling Eben-e-e-zer.' I could choke them with a good will when they do that. You can just bet your life if I ever have any boys there won't a blessed one of them be named Ebenezer, not if I have a dozen."

When he went to the city to the Junior High, he felt that it was the chance of his life and he registered as E. Collins Darling, but he did not tell Grandfather. When he told Father and Mother what he had done, they did not say anything, but the expression on his father's face made E. Collins feel anything but comfortable. "If he had given me a regular blowing up I wouldn't have minded half so much," he told his mother afterwards. To his disgust, she expressed no sympathy for him whatever.

There was nothing that Grandfather enjoyed more than a good debate. In his younger days he had excelled in it, and young Eben, to his grandfather's delight, also excelled in it. Soon after he went to the city school he was elected a member of the Forum there, and whenever there was a debate on he discussed it before and after with Grandfather.

Some time in his second year there was an Oratorical Contest in the city. One member of each of the four Junior High Schools competed with the others for championship. Eben was chosen to represent his school, and he set his heart on winning the championship. Much as he cared about it, however, Grandfather was even more keen. Night after night they went over the subject for debate, and many were the valuable suggestions that Grandfather made.

"Gee!" said Eben Jr., one night, "I am thankful you are not one of my opponents. There would not be much show for me if you were."

"Don't know about that," chuckled the old gentleman, "you are something of a crackerjack—as you say—yourself."

The eventful day came at last. "I shall be thinking of you all day long, boy, and of course, I hope you'll win, but I know you will do well, and we shall be proud of you anyway. Don't seem as though I could wait till night to know, though."

The contest was in the morning, and at noon Eben was informed that he had won with high honor. In the afternoon there was a class meeting and a banquet, so it was nearly seven o'clock before he reached home.

"Three cheers, Grandfather!" he shouted, as he rushed into the house. "We won, and the judges all said my argument was great."

"That is good," said the old gentleman, "I congratulate you," but there was no enthusiasm in his face or voice. Young Eben looked at him in hurt surprise.

"What is the matter?" he asked. Surely Grandfather must be sick or something terrible had happened.

"Nothing—nothing much. I saw the announcement in the paper just now, but it said in big letters that E. Collins Darling had won. I did not know what to make of it, but your mother says that is

what they call you up there. It is all right, of course, but somehow I felt sort of disappointed not to see the old name." In spite of himself the old gentleman's voice quivered.

"I never felt so mean and contemptible in my life before, and I never want to again," Eben said afterwards. "Gee! but I was ashamed from the crown of my head to the soles of my unworthy feet. It was simply a rotten feeling. I made up my mind that the thing was going to be righted if it took my last cent. I went straight back to the city, to the newspaper office, and told the editor just how it was. I asked him if he would correct it in the next day's paper and told him I would pay for it if he would. He was a trump and said that he would. I wish you could have seen Grandfather's face when I got home the next night.

" 'What do you think,' he cried, before I was hardly in the house, 'this evening's paper says there was a mistake in the announcement of the winner's name,—that it should have been Ebenezer C. Darling. Probably it seems foolish to you, boy, but I love the old name, and it made me very happy to see it.' "

"Henceforth and forever, boys, my name is Ebenezer, not E. Collins," said Eben the next day at school. "Darling Ebenezer?" asked one, with a laugh.

"Yes, Ebenezer Darling, or Darling Eben-e-e-zer, just as you please, so long as it is Ebenezer. That's that, and don't you forget it!"

—*The Beacon.*

Accommodating

"Shut the outside door, please, Dorothy!" said mother.

"You're pretty accommodating!" observed Dorothy's Aunt Bessie.

"Oh, yes," agreed the little girl, "some days I 'commodate all day long."

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE

MISS ANNA E. SIBLEY, *Chairman,* 82 Browne Street, Brookline, Mass.
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To cheer and comfort those who are ill, lonely, or discouraged, and to give to those living far from a church some of the inspiration of the printed word by the publication of one good sermon, or similar article in each issue of the *Cheerful Letter Magazine.* Only such simple religious truths and principles as are agreed upon by all churches are printed.

To help those who live far from schools, or who wish to continue their studies by means of correspondence with a teacher.

To establish Circulating Libraries in isolated communities, schools, and colleges in rural and mountain districts where public libraries and other educational privileges are not available.

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Letters containing subscriptions to the paper, fifty cents a year, and *money from the Sunshine Bags* should be sent to the Cheerful Letter Exchange, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Checks or postal orders should be made payable to the Cheerful Letter Exchange.

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